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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/656,642	09/05/2003	Robert H. Ashton	US20020383	8104
7590	05/30/2007		EXAMINER	
WHIRLPOOL PATENTS COMPANY			HUSBAND, SARAH E	
MD 0750			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
Suite 102			1746	
500 Renaissance Drive				
St. Joseph, MI 49085			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			05/30/2007	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/656,642	ASHTON ET AL.
	Examiner Sarah E. Husband	Art Unit 1746

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 March 2007.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                                   2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5 and 20-26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-4, 6-11, 13-19, 27, 28 and 30-39 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 12 and 29 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 12 March 2007 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
    1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Response to Arguments*

Applicant's arguments, see Remarks, filed 3/12/2007, with respect to the objection to the drawings and claims have been fully considered and are persuasive. The objections of the drawings and claims have been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments, see Remarks, filed 3/12/2007, with respect to the 112 rejection have been fully considered and are persuasive. The 112 rejection of claims 1-19 has been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments regarding the restriction of claims 14 and 15 are persuasive and have been examined with the current office action.

Applicant's arguments, see Remarks, filed 3/12/2007, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1-4, 6-11, 16 and 19 under 35 USC 102(e) have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn in light of the amendments to the claims. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Hoffman (US 5320120).

The dependent 103 rejections are withdrawn as well based on the withdrawal of the 102(e) rejection.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103 or § 102*

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the

subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless – (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 6-11, 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hoffman (US Patent No. 5320120).

Hoffman discloses a dishwasher having a wash chamber (17), pump (19), spray arm (26), filter chamber in a wall (32), inlet (30), porous filter element (31) which also has the outlet for the fluid to flow back into the wash chamber (col. 3, ll. 65-col. 4, ll. 5). The floor of the wash chamber (16) is lower than the filter chamber and therefore is part of the wall region. However, if this is not the case, one of ordinary skill in the art would easily foresee the relocation of parts and the placement of such a filtering chamber in the wall as well.

Rearrangement of parts was held to have been obvious, *In re Japikse* 86 USPQ 70 (CCPA 1950). Hoffman also discloses the spray arm has a nozzle positioned to spray wash liquid on the opening and the filter area is located in the rear of the chamber (Fig. 2, Item 38).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoffman in view of Price (2003/0213505).

Hoffman discloses the dishwasher in the above 102 rejection. Hoffman does not specifically disclose the wall portion curving inwardly but does disclose gathering surfaces. Price discloses the walls to the chamber curving inwardly. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Hoffman with Price for the benefit of concealing the filtered material.

Claims 16, 17, 27, 31-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoffman in view of Applicants specification.

Hoffman discloses the apparatus described above in the 102(b) rejection, but does not specifically disclose a sump screen, strainer or sensors detecting the liquid level of the filter chamber. Applicant's specification describes a "...screen can have a removable strainer... as is well known in the art." (Paragraph 26) The specification also describes, "[liquid level] sensors 107, 107' can be optical sensors, turbidity sensors or pressure sensors as are well known in the art... US Patent 6909743 and US Patent 6103017, each incorporated by reference, disclose the use of pressure sensors to automatically initiate a filter purge cycle in dishwashers." (Paragraph 36) Sump screens are also well known in the art and would be within the level of one of ordinary skill to foresee their use in Hoffman. Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Hoffman with a strainer and filter level indicating means, as they are known improvements and accessories to dishwashers.

Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoffman in view of Sergeant (US Patent No. 5743281).

Hoffman discloses the dishwasher shown above in the 102 rejection. Hoffman does not specifically disclose the dishwasher is a drawer type. Sergeant discloses dishwashers of a drawer type. Both of these types of dishwashers are common and one of ordinary skill would immediately foresee that the structure shown by Hoffman could be incorporated into a drawer type of dishwasher. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine Hoffman's filtering and dishwashing structure with a drawer type of dishwasher as they are very common and because of the additional convenience that these dishwashers provide.

Claims 28 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoffman and Applicant's specification, as applied to claims 17, 27, 28, 31-39 above, and further in view of Thies (US Patent No. 5,909,743).

Hoffman and Applicant's specification disclose the dishwasher shown above in the 103 rejection. They do not specifically disclose a pump for the filter chamber. Thies discloses a pump for the filter chamber (54) along with a pump for draining the washing chamber (34). At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Hoffman and Applicant's spec. with the pump arrangement shown by Thies for the benefit of a flow control of the filtered material.

Claims 13-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoffman in view of Thies (US Patent No. 5,909,743).

Hoffman discloses the dishwasher shown above in the 102 rejection. Hoffman also discloses a pump, which draws water from the wash chamber to drain (41). Hoffman does not specifically disclose a pump for the filter chamber. Thies discloses a pump for the filter chamber (54) along with a pump for draining the washing chamber (34). At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Hoffman with the pump arrangement shown by Thies for the benefit of a flow control of the filtered material.

*Allowable Subject Matter*

Claims 12 and 29 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art does not teach, suggest or disclose the filtering system in the wall of the dishwasher connected with a selector valve having a first inlet connected to the filter drain and a second inlet connected to the wash chamber drain, an outlet connected to the pump, and one or more valve elements and actuators for selectively closing and opening the inlets.

*Conclusion*

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sarah E. Husband whose telephone number is (571) 272-8387. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael E. Barr can be reached on (571) 272-1414. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

SEH



MICHAEL BARR  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER